



Childhood Connections

May 3, 2023

## Spotlight on Professionals

Spotlight on Professionals aims to share stories from those working in childhood programs. This includes all professionals such as home visiting, early intervention, child care, Head Start, preschool, and afterschool. These stories are also available on the [Early Connections website](#).



Photo Credit: Chelsey Wright

Chelsey Wright is an early childhood leader who found support in her professional growth and overcame obstacles to follow her dream. During high school, Chelsey enrolled in a dual credit early childhood program at the Ozarks Technical Community College (OTC) and worked in a preschool classroom at their Early Childhood Education Center.

During this time, Chelsey entered a Skills USA competition in early childhood education. The contest consists of a knowledge exam and skills performance. Chelsey received 1st place at state level competition and 6th place at national level competition. With her 1st place award, she received a full scholarship to OTC. She says that the scholarship motivated her to go to college.

Two years after completing high school, Chelsea graduated with her Associate Degree in Early Childhood Development. Upon graduation, she accepted an assistant teacher position at the OTC Early Childhood Education Center. Chelsea says life became crazy and going back to school to finish a bachelor's degree seemed impossible, but she earned a bachelor's degree in Child and Family Development. "It was a long and hard journey, but the T.E.A.C.H. MISSOURI scholarship took an impossible situation and made it happen." After completing her degree, Chelsey returned to work at the OTC Center as a lead teacher, and she went on to earn a master's certificate in early childhood business and leadership through a T.E.A.C.H. MISSOURI scholarship. She attributes her successful career to the supports she received along this journey. "I cannot put into words the blessing and impact this has made on my life. I love being a teacher and I cannot wait to see what comes next."

## NEW! MO Professional Development (MOPD) System

The new MOPD System will launch in June 2023. In preparation, the OOC is sending announcements about important deadlines and transition plans via email to all child care providers and trainers.

The announcements include important dates, fee information, and plans to close the current OPEN Initiative Toolbox and the Missouri Workshop Calendar. You can read the announcements on the [MOPD](#) webpage.

## UPDATE! Child Care Relief Funds

There are several child care relief grants currently available to child care providers who are contracted with the DESE child care subsidy program or licensed with all health and safety training.

- Sustain Subsidy Operation grants support provider operations (must be contracted with the DESE child care subsidy program to receive these funds). Application closes May 31, 2023. [Learn more on the webpage.](#)
- The Annual Training Costs grant supports child care providers with the costs associated to train child care staff members. Application closes July 15, 2023. [Learn more on the webpage.](#)
- **New!** Recruitment of Child Care Staff (New Hire) **NOW OPEN!** Designed to support child care providers with the recruitment of child care staff members. Application closes June 30, 2023. [Learn more on the webpage.](#)

Check out all of the child care relief funds applications on the [Child Care Relief Funds website](#).

## NEW! First Steps Training Webpage

Visit the new First Steps Training webpage for easy access to trainings offered by Early Intervention staff and links to other training resources.

The new [First Steps training webpage](#) includes links to:

- First Steps Online On Demand Module Training
- Recorded Trainings On Demand



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY HEAD START! Celebrate 58 Years of Head Start

May 18th is Head Start's 58th birthday! Head Start programs prepare America's most vulnerable young children to succeed in school and in life beyond school. Head Start programs deliver services to children and families in areas of early learning, health, and family well-being while engaging parents as partners every step of the way. Learn more about the history of Head Start on the [Head Start Timeline](#).

## ANNOUNCEMENT! T.E.A.C.H. Missouri Scholarships for Education

Do you want to advance your career with little or no costs and a dedicated advisor to help you every step of the way? T.E.A.C.H. Missouri scholarships are available for child care professionals with different backgrounds, needs, and dreams!

Check out [Advance your Child Care Career](#) to participate or sponsor an employee.

## RESOURCE! Regional Family Resource Centers

- Live Virtual Training Information
- In-Person Trainings By Request
- National Organizations Offering Additional Early Intervention-Related Training Options  
(*may provide options for professional development hours for non-licensed providers*)

If you are a First Steps provider, please visit and bookmark the [First Steps training webpage](#).

### **UPDATE! Systems Asset and Gap Analysis**

In 2022, the OOC completed a Systems Asset and Gap Analysis (SAGA). The SAGA analyzes the landscape of the state's early childhood system. The SAGA addresses integration of early childhood and health systems. Additionally, the report identifies gaps in the promotion of early developmental health and family well-being.

The SAGA includes a network analysis of the early care and education and maternal-child health systems. The report also identified and described the relationships among organizations that make up those systems. Read the full SAGA on the [Outreach webpage](#).

### **NEW! Missouri Standards and Competencies Crosswalk**

Missouri will move to a new set of Standards and Competencies for early childhood professionals with the release of the new Professional Development System. The new competencies align with National Association of Young Children's (NAEYC's) *Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators*.

To see a crosswalk between the previously used *Core Competencies for Early Childhood and Youth Development Professionals (Kansas and Missouri)* and the NAEYC standards visit the [MOPD resources webpage](#).

### **NEW! 2022 Stakeholder Survey Report**

Each year the Office of Childhood sends out a survey to state, regional, and local stakeholders. We use the results of the survey to evaluate progress and make improvements at the Office. Over 420 stakeholders responded to the survey in 2022.

Family Resource Centers are not-for-profit agencies that work with Children's Division to provide support, services, and resources to meet the unique needs of foster, adoptive, relative, and guardianship children and their families.

If you are in Missouri and a member of a foster, adoptive, relative, or guardianship family, or if you are a foster, adoptive, relative, or guardianship child, you are eligible for these services; training, peer support groups, activities, respite care and more!

Find your local Family Resource Center on the [Missouri Department of Social Services webpage](#).

### **UPDATE! Change to FCSR Registration Fee**

The Family Care Safety Registry (FCSR) increased the registration fee on May 1, 2023. The fee increased from \$14.00 to \$15.00 (along with a credit processing fee of \$0.55, for a total of \$15.55 for online registrations).

The fee increase is a result of state law and is required by the Missouri State Highway Patrol. You can reach the FCSR by phone at 866-422-6872 or 573-526-

To read the full report and a comparison between 2020, 2021, and 2022 results visit the [Preschool Development Grant webpage](#).

### **NEW! Training: Strong Parents, Stable Children.**

This in-person training opportunity is for First Steps Providers and System Point of Entry staff (SPOE). Dr. Dave Schramm will provide a 3-hour training titled *Strong Parents, Stable Children: Building Protective Factors to Strengthen Families*.

First Steps providers who did not receive the registration information via the WebSPOE message center can email us at [EarlyIntervention@dese.mo.gov](mailto:EarlyIntervention@dese.mo.gov) for more information.

### **REMINDER! Help Reduce and Control Cross Contamination in Diaper Changing Areas**

This is a reminder for all licensed and license-exempt programs.

If your facility cares for children that are not yet toilet trained and require diaper changes, you must ensure that your diaper changing area has an airtight disposal container to use for placing soiled diapers.

This requirement helps reduce fecal contamination and controls the spread of disease. Fecal contamination has been associated with increased diarrheal rates in child care facilities. Gastrointestinal tract disease and Hepatitis A virus infections spread from infected persons through fecal contamination of hands and objects.

If you have questions before purchasing a new airtight disposal container, we encourage you to contact your [Compliance Inspector](#).

1974 or via email [fcsr@health.mo.gov](mailto:fcsr@health.mo.gov).

### **REMINDER! Missouri Part C State Plan for First Steps Changes Effective May 1, 2023.**

The state regulations implementing Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), known as the [Missouri Part C State Plan for First Steps](#), were approved by the State Board of Education at the January 2023 board meeting. These rules went into effect May 1, 2023.

A webinar was held on March 28, 2023, to give First Steps providers more information on the upcoming changes. First Steps providers who did not receive the recording can email us at [EarlyIntervention@dese.mo.gov](mailto:EarlyIntervention@dese.mo.gov) for more information.

### **NEW! Free Mental Health Training**

Start Early is offering a free three-part, [virtual learning series](#) from May-July. This learning series focuses on maternal health equity and well-being. The training will help you support people who are pregnant or have recently given birth.

Participants will learn about physical recovery, maternal health warning signs, mental health and wellness, maternal self-



care, and systems of social support.

## Spotlight on Success

Spotlight on Success aims to share stories from local programs that are building community partnerships in order to strengthen and coordinate childhood programs.



Photo Credit: Sarah Martin, George Washington Carver Park Ranger

For more than 25 years, the Missouri Parents as Teachers Parent Education Program supervisors and parent educators in the Southwest region of the state have been meeting to increase program services to families and support each other. Kerri Clouse, Program Coordinator for Joplin's program and a Missouri Parent Education Program Support Consultant, facilitates the group. These virtual meetings are typically held monthly during the school year, with follow up emails throughout the month.

The group's goal is to be intentional in building relationships with community partners to help strengthen families. The group is excited about a new partnership with the George Washington Carver National Monument, a unit of the National Park Service. The programs help park staff with their quarterly on-site story hours. The district parent education programs collaborate to host the story hours. Over 13 families attended a recent story hour. As part of the partnership, George Washington Carver National Monument created seasonal packets with information about the park site which the programs distribute to preschool families during home visits.

This group has also worked hard over the years to maintain strong relationships with two local area hospitals and the opportunity to help support families and

children beginning at birth or before. Parent educators refer new families to the appropriate parent education programs. A flyer with Missouri school districts and Kansas parent education programs is available in both English and Spanish. Through a collaboration with the Carthage Literacy Council, parent educators make sure every baby born at the hospitals receives a packet of books and parent education program information.

Kerri said, "We believe positive partnerships between the parent education programs and community resources strengthens families and helps prepare every child for success in school and in life."

## UPDATE! Preschool Development Grant



The Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5) provides funding over three years to coordinate a more effective, high-quality early childhood system that better prepares Missouri children for success.

Each month the Office of Childhood hosts a live webinar to provide updates and information about the PDG B-5 to stakeholders. A [recording](#) and the [PowerPoint slides](#) from the April webinar is available in case you were unable to attend and wish to hear the information. You can view archived webinars here:

- [March 2023](#)
- [February 2023](#)
- [January 2023](#)
- [November 2022](#)
- [October 2022](#)
- [September 2022](#)

A [PDG B-5 dashboard](#) is also updated monthly. This dashboard provides an at-a-glance look at priority areas, budget status, and key accomplishments.

## PDG B-5 Monthly Webinar

Join us for the next PDG B-5 Stakeholder webinar on May 23, 2023, from noon to 1:00 p.m. to learn more and ask questions. You can [access the webinar](#) in a Google Chrome or Safari web browser. Do not view in Internet Explorer. We hope you can participate!

## Archived Editions of Childhood Connections

Visit the Office of Childhood website to find [previous editions](#) of the Childhood Connections.

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